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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Extension Service
Washington 25, D. C.

SUMMARY OF MARKETING EXTENSION WORK CARRIED ON BY FEDERAL
AND STATE EXTENSION SERVICES 1/

Marketing extension work in States, counties, and communities has been developed by the Federal and State extension services to provide farmers, distributors, and consumers with educational assistance in bringing about greater efficiency in the marketing and distribution of farm products. Emphasis has been placed on the farmers' interests in getting their marketing services performed at the lowest cost. The subject matter taught has included principles, costs, and methods employed in the marketing and distribution of farm products. Use has been made of the best experience in educational methods and results of available research. Marketing and outlook information has been widely disseminated.

Federal Extension Service

In the Federal Extension Service, five professional workers are engaged as leaders in marketing activities. Their work is divided on a commodity basis, with one man responsible for livestock and wool marketing, one for fruits and vegetables, one for dairy and poultry products, one for grain grading, and the fifth for cotton, peanuts, rice, and tobacco.

These leaders assist the State extension services in organizing and developing educational programs in marketing. The plans of work which the State extension services submit annually are reviewed by these Federal leaders. They also perform the function of keeping State extension leaders informed of the latest marketing techniques, practices and developments.

Many marketing problems reach beyond State lines and have to be dealt with on a regional or even a national basis. This makes necessary close cooperation among the States and between State and Federal governments. These Federal leaders aid in developing and coordinating extension marketing programs on a regional basis within different sections of the country where similar types of marketing problems exist.

Another major responsibility of the Federal Extension Service is that of working in liaison with various bureaus in the Department of Agriculture and other Federal agencies in developing and carrying out needed educational work in marketing. Important in these contacts has

1/ Prepared by the Economic Section of the Federal Extension Service, and based on work underway as of October 1946.

been counseling with research workers and others relative to pertinent problems in marketing and distribution as encountered in field work.

State Extension Services

The State extension services have workers in every agricultural county in the nation. These workers spend part of their time encouraging improvements in the marketing system and the development and adoption of more efficient methods in marketing of agricultural products. These county agents are supported by 87 State workers assigned direct responsibilities for educational marketing work in 36 States. Puerto Rico and the Territory of Hawaii also employ marketing specialists. At the present time, 12 States do not have professional workers in marketing.

Practically every State and Territory is carrying on active programs in one or more phases of marketing. State extension marketing workers, aided by other State extension personnel, develop and help county workers conduct educational programs relating to costs and efficiency of distribution; market demands, consumer preferences and nutritional requirements; adjustments and improvements in marketing methods; organization, finance and operation of cooperatives; public programs in marketing and distribution; market prices and price relationships; market outlets; trade barriers and tariffs; transportation and freight rates; market and storage facilities; processing and packaging; merchandising programs; coordination of production and marketing of commodities as to kind, quality and volume; and extending the use of market news, crop and livestock estimates, grading and inspection services.

When adequate research data are not available, surveys have been made by the State extension services as a means of obtaining information necessary in improving existing marketing facilities and services, as well as for determining the need for new ones. Assistance is given producers in appraising existing marketing procedures to effect changes that will bring about greater efficiency in the physical handling of agricultural products and the better operation of the pricing system. The movement of farm commodities from competing areas is also analyzed and farmers are advised of opportunities for marketing commodities that are in abundance in particular areas.

Considerable work is done in cooperation with State departments of agriculture and bureaus of markets in acquainting farmers with the economic significance of grades and standards, as well as teaching them how to market their produce according to grade.

One of the newer marketing programs in the States calls attention to consumer education. The home demonstration agents have made large numbers of housewives more conscious of better nutrition which is broadening the market for farm products. These programs have emphasized the economy of buying during seasons of peak movement to minimize the effects of market gluts. Attention has also been given to proper food conservation and the most economical use of commodities purchased.

The various extension marketing programs have been carried out to keep farmers and marketing agencies informed of current and impending situations affecting the marketing and outlook for farm products. In 1945, the State extension services worked with 3.9 million farm families in solving their marketing problems. Assistance was given in the organization of 1,125 new cooperatives, and 9,245 existing cooperatives were also helped with such problems as improved marketing services, business management and membership relations. Aid was given to 11,981 private marketing and distribution agencies and trade groups, involving various marketing activities and problems. Another phase of the work dealt with 2,954 market facility improvement programs. State and county extension workers made or cooperated in making 10,638 marketing surveys for use in dealing with marketing and distribution problems. Assistance was given in connection with 1,286 special merchandising programs for farm commodities.

The Federal and State extension services have had the close cooperation and assistance of many agencies interested in the marketing of farm commodities. This has greatly enhanced the effectiveness of educational programs in marketing.

The various conditions which have been mentioned in this report are not isolated but are connected with each other and with the general economic situation of the country. It is therefore necessary to consider the economic situation of the country as a whole and to see how the various conditions mentioned in this report are connected with the general economic situation of the country. The economic situation of the country is determined by a number of factors, such as the state of the economy, the state of the labor market, the state of the capital market, the state of the foreign trade, and the state of the government. These factors are all interconnected and they all influence each other. It is therefore necessary to consider the economic situation of the country as a whole and to see how the various conditions mentioned in this report are connected with the general economic situation of the country.

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